

(a) whether it is a fact that recently a number of demonstrations were held at many places of the country by farmers in protest of land acquisition;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government is going to make amendment in land acquisition law; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SISIR ADHIKARI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) There have been demonstrations by farmers in protest of land acquisition in some States, particularly, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

(c) and (d) Amendment of Land Acquisition Act, 1894 is under consideration of the Government. This department is finalizing an integrated Land Acquisition and Rehabilitation & Resettlement Bill, 2011 to address various issues related to land acquisition and rehabilitation & resettlement.

Advisory to Gram Panchayats

296. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has issued an advisory to Gram Panchayats making it mandatory for them to convene Gram Sabhas regularly;

(b) if so whether the initiative is aimed at making the projects run under MGNREGA less centralized;

(c) whether there is a provision in the Act which requires Panchayats convene such meetings and make proactive disclosures but many Panchayats are not implementing it;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether several faults in its implementation and lack of mandatory proactive disclosures by the local bodies have been found during the performance audit by CAG and Government is trying to rectify it now; and

(f) if so, the detail thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI PRADEEP JAIN): (a) to (d) Gram Panchayats have been given pivotal role in registration and issue of job cards, accepting applications for work and issue of dated receipts, providing work to the applicant, maintenance of records, identification of projects as per recommendations of Gram Sabha/Ward Sabha, preparation of development plan and maintain shelf of projects under various provisions of MGNREG Act. In accordance with Section 16(5) of the Act, at least 50% of the projects by cost are to be executed by the Gram Panchayats. Section 13(1) of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA provides that the Panchayats at district, intermediate and village levels shall be the principal authorities for planning and implementation of the schemes made under the Act.

Section 16(1) of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA provides that Gram Panchayats shall be responsible for identification of projects in the Gram Panchayat area to be taken up under the scheme as per the recommendations of the Gram Sabha and Ward Sabhas. Section 17(2) of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA provides that Gram Sabha shall conduct regular social audits of all the projects under the Scheme taken up within the Gram Panchayat. Social Audit is an on going process and is to be held at least once in every six months. The Ministry has accorded utmost importance to the organization of Social Audits by the Gram Panchayats and issued instructions to the States to make necessary arrangements for the purpose. The Ministry has also issued advisory to the States to open adequate works to ensure full enjoyment of rights by the rural households under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA.

(e) and (f) In order to rectify faults and shortcoming in implementation and proactive disclosures by local bodies observed during performance audits, the Ministry has, in consultation with the Comptroller & Auditor General of India, notified on 30th June, 2011, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Audit of Schemes Rules, 2011, which includes Social Audit by Gram Sabhas:

The salient features of the said rules are:

- Every Gram Panchayat to have at least one social audit every six months;
- Social Audit Units to facilitate verification of records with primary stakeholders and work sites;
- Gram Sabha shall be convened to discuss the findings of the verification exercise and also to review the compliance on transparency and accountability, fulfilment of the rights and entitlements of labourers and proper utilisation of funds;

- The Gram Sabha shall provide a platform to all villagers to seek and obtain further information and responses from all involved in the implementation;
- Summary of findings of social audit to be submitted by the State Government to the Comptroller & Auditor General of India.

Merger of land acquisition, rehabilitation and resettlement bills

297. DR. K.V.P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry proposes to merge the land acquisition and rehabilitation and resettlement bills;
- (b) if so, the details of the proposal; and
- (c) by when it is likely to be finalised?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SISIR ADHIKARI): (a) and (b) Yes sir. This Department is in the midst of re-drafting the single integrated Land Acquisition and Rehabilitation & Resettlement Bill, 2011. The details of proposal would be known once it is introduced in the Parliament.

- (c) The bill is likely to be finalized shortly.

Check dams constructed under MGNREGS

298. SHRI N.K. SINGH: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of check dams constructed under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) works in the country till now;
- (b) the number and percentage of such check dams which are unfit for use;
- (c) whether Government has devised monitoring and regulatory checks to monitor the quality of works under the MGNREGS; and